

they tie heavy burdens to their own feet, and then complain because they cannot mount. They draw contrasts between the right and the "expedient," and those who stand without compromise for the right they sneer at as dreamy fanatics or impractical enthusiasts. In the business world, in social, civil, family life, people are continually trying to evade the commandments of God as though they were burdens grievous to be borne. But John declares, "His commandments are not grievous;" and Jesus himself asserts, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

#### "Love Your Enemies"

Christian Leader.

During the Revolutionary War a Dunker leader named Miller was grievously insulted by a man named Widman, who was afterward sentenced to be hanged as a British spy. Miller went to General Washington, and begged for Widman's life. The commander-in-chief replied:

"I would like to release Widman, because he is your friend; but I can not, even for that consideration."

"Friend!" cried Miller, "he is not my friend; he is only my enemy, and therefore I want to save him."

The general was so touched that he pardoned the man.

#### "Have Faith in God"

Christian Advocate (Nashville.)

The children of God are not exempt from great calamities. Even the best of them are sometimes called to pass through the same experience as the Hebrew Psalmist, and to say, each one for himself: "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." But the situation thus vividly described is relieved by an abiding trust in the kindness of an overruling Providence: "Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life." Wherefore the Psalmist reasons with his soul: "Why art thou cast down, O, my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

#### The Worldly-Minded Man and the Prayer-Meeting

Central Baptist.

A worldly-minded man does not wait to be expelled from prayer-meeting. The atmosphere is so uncomfortably spiritual in that pious circle that he stays away of his own accord. Self-respect and composure of feeling restrain him from giving the offense of his presence in such exercises. He feels far more keenly than the pious participants the incongruity of his situation. It would be a miserably irreligious devotional service in which he could feel at home. The continuance of notoriously bad people in the membership of a church is as much a reflection on the church as on the bad people. Spiritual life ought to be so pronounced and church sentiment so

well understood that it would be more uncomfortable inside than outside the church to one not qualified for membership. This is the uncultivated part of the field of church discipline.

#### Surcharged with the Holy Spirit

Tongue of Fire.

When the lecturer on electricity wants to show an example of a human body surcharged with his fire, he places a person on a stool with glass legs. The glass serves to isolate him from the earth, because it will not conduct the fire—the electric fluid; were it not for this, however much might be poured into his frame, it would be carried away by the earth; but when thus isolated from it, he retains all that enters him.

You see no fire, you hear no fire; but you are told that it is pouring into him. Presently you are challenged to the proof—asked to come near, and hold your hand close to his person; when you do so, a spark of fire shoots out toward you.

If thou, then, wouldest have thy soul surcharged with the fire of God, so that those who come nigh to thee shall feel some mysterious influence proceeding out from thee, thou must draw nigh to the source of that fire—to the throne of God and of the Lamb, and shut thyself out from the world—that cold world which so swiftly steals our fire away.

Enter into thy closet and shut the door, and there, isolated "before the throne," await the baptism; then the fire shall fill thee, and when thou comest forth, holy power will attend thee, and thou shalt labor, not in thy own strength, but "with demonstration of the Spirit and with power."

## The Sunday School

### LESSON FOR APRIL 24

BY THE EDITOR

A Lesson on Forgiveness.—Matt. 18:21-35

GOLDEN TEXT.—Forgive, and be shall be forgiven.—Luke 6:37.

LESSON THOUGHT.—The spirit of willing forgiveness takes possession of every heart that has been truly cleansed of sin by the blood of Jesus.

#### Home Readings

A lesson on forgiveness. Matt. 18:21-35.

Forgive us our debts. Matt. 6:5-15.

Love your enemies. Matt. 5:38-48.

Seven times in a day. Luke 17:1-10.

Forbearing and forgiving. Col. 3:1-27.

Plenteous in mercy. Psalms 103:1-22.

#### Introductory Notes

Here we have a lesson on the memorable eighteenth of Matthew. It is a lesson on forgiveness, and grew out of our Lord's words concerning offenses, on forgiving one another, how to treat those who had done us wrong. The words of Jesus regarding the forgiveness of others suggested Peter's question, who was anxious to have something a little more definite than what he got from Je-

sus. He thought forgiveness is something that could be reduced to a question of arithmetic.

#### Meaning of the Text

21, 22. *Then—Peter.* Jesus had been teaching the disciples as to their duty when others trespassed against them. The duty thus enforced seemed to Peter a difficult one to perform and asked for more light. *Seven times.* In case forgiving the offender failed to cure him of his sin, how often should the same rule be applied, seven times? The Rabbis said, "Forgive a first offense, forgive a second, forgive a third, and punish the fourth." As a disciple of Jesus, Peter felt that he should go beyond the requirements of the Rabbis, and seven times would seem to him a great stretch of virtue. Could any more be expected? *Seventy times seven.* The reply shows that Peter had not comprehended the true spirit of forgiveness. It is not a matter of rule at all.

23, 24. *Therefore.* Jesus now illustrates in parable the nature of Christian forgiveness. *Take account.* Make a reckoning or settlement. *His servants.* The officers of his government. *One was brought.* One of his officials having charge of the revenues of a province. *Ten thousand talents.* A talent was of different value in different countries: the ten thousand talents may have been worth \$18,000,000 or \$20,000,000, a sum so large that it would be impossible to pay the debt.

25-27. *Had not to pay.* He lost or embezzled the king's revenues which he had collected, much like modern bankers do. *To be sold.* This is the course that the law would take. Even the law of Moses allowed this. Lev. 25:36, 41; Deut. 15:12; II Kings 4:1. The sale would include wife and children. *Worshipped him.* Fell prostrate before him in lowly homage. *Have patience.* He asked only for indulgence, not the forgiveness of the debt.

28-34. *Same servant.* The one who had been forgiven the large sum of money as a debt. *Hundred pence.* Probably \$16 or \$18. The two debts stand then as \$18,000,000 and \$16, the first our debt to God which he freely forgives, the second the wrong our fellow-men do us, and which many refuse to forgive. What heartlessness. *Fell down.* Just what his creditor had done in the presence of his monarch. *Pay thee all.* Which he could easily do as the amount was small. *Would not.* Tho he himself had just received full forgiveness of his own debt which was one million times larger. *Fellow-servants saw.* They were struck with the act as cruel, inhuman and wrong. *Wicked servant.* His unforgiving spirit was worse than the robbing of millions of dollars. *Till he should pay all.* But how could he in the hands of tormentors? The parable does not suggest that the torments would be accepted as payment.

#### The Lesson Applied

1. *How Many Times.*—There are too many people who ask this question. I have already forgiven that number of times, and surely there is a point at which forgiveness